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The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McKeon:

I am writing to request that you convene an oversight hearing this week to investigate the Department of Education's report, Final Inspection Report: The Reading First Program's Grant Application Process, which was released on Friday.

The Inspector General's new report documents in extensive detail the U.S. Department of Education's complete and utter disregard for the law, its own guidance, and basic federal procurement standards in order to award grants that benefited a handful of commercial publishers, including those with close political and financial ties to the Bush Administration. These contracts were awarded despite concerns in some cases about the quality of the curricula and despite the fact that, in many cases, states preferred other curricula. As a result of the Department of Education's missteps, the Inspector General has questioned whether any of the grants awarded through this \$4.8 billion program were approved in compliance with the law.

I am deeply troubled by the findings of this report, and by the fact that this is the first in a series of six Inspector General reports on Reading First. It is imperative that Congress and our committee in particular, as the authors of Reading First, get to the bottom of the problems raised by the Inspector General. More importantly, we must determine what steps we can take to ensure that a law intended to help our schoolchildren learn to read through use of the best research available is implemented in a way that is consistent with that goal.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

  
GEORGE MILLER  
Senior Democratic Member